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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2006

#### In Today's Papers

Turkey Sends Support Messages to Iraqi Government  
Sabah, Milliyet, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others:  
Turkey's Special Representative to Iraq Oguz Celikkol met in Baghdad with the Iraqi Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to convey messages of support from Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Gul. Celikkol told the Iraqi leaders that since a new government has been formed, Iraq is expected to take steps to combat the PKK. He also said Turkey would not remain indifferent to developments in Kirkuk, and the three-party mechanism must be revived against the PKK. He also requested the banning of Iraqi political parties close to the PKK. Yeni Safak says Celikkol has invited Foreign Minister Jabari to Turkey, but Ankara believes it is too early to issue an official invitation for President Talabani to visit Turkey. Turkish sources told the press Celikkol used an American military plane to travel to Baghdad for security reasons.

Commenting in the conservative-nationalist daily *Turkiye*, Nuri Elibol suggests that the PKK will be a tool for the US against Iran and other regimes in the region: "For many years Turkey has been trying to get a green light from the US to eradicate the PKK in Iraq. But because the US plans to use the PKK against Iran, Syria and possibility even Turkey, the US doesn't want to take any action against them. Before the US launches an operation against Syria or Iran, all kind of advance actions, including acts of sabotage, will be launched by the PKK. Then the US will launch the main operation while these countries are in a state of shock. Therefore, the US considers the PKK to be an important subcontractor in a possible operation against Iran."

Turkish-Armenian "Secret" Talks

Cumhuriyet says that secret meetings between Turkey and Armenia took place during a visit of Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul to Vienna in March for the EU Troika meeting. Turkey proposed forming two committees to handle disagreements, and wants the genocide claims to be discussed by historians. Yerevan rejected the proposal, but is positive about launching political discussions with Ankara.

Lawsuit against Baydemir for Transporting Dead Terrorist  
All papers report the Chief Prosecutor's Office has filed a lawsuit against Mayor Osman Baydemir of Diyarbakir for sending a municipal ambulance to transport the body of a PKK terrorist killed in a clash with Turkish security forces during the social unrest in the mainly Kurdish southeastern city in late March. The prosecutor demanded a jail term up to one year for Baydemir and three other municipal personnel for "improper use of public vehicles under Turkey's transportation laws." Baydemir said his municipality considered such requests a humanitarian duty, and that they do not investigate the identity of the deceased at such occasions.

Annan Pessimistic on Current Conditions in Cyprus  
All papers: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said in a letter to Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat that the existing conditions in Cyprus do not allow the reactivation of the UN goodwill mission in the divided island. The Turkish Cypriot "President" said despite the fact that Annan said that conditions prevented the resuming of the UN-backed efforts, the UNSYG ordered his assistant for political matters, Ibrahim Gambari, to visit the island soon to see the situation.

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Greek, Turkish Ships Avoid Row near Aegean Islet  
All papers report a Turkish navy ship left a disputed area in the Aegean Sea following the arrival of the Greek Coast Guard to help a Greek fishing boat that had been ordered by the Turkish ship to leave the area near an uninhabited islet, Kardak (known to Greeks as Imia,) in the eastern Aegean. The two countries almost clashed in 1996 over that same islet. The incident off Kardak came days after fighter jets from the two nations collided over the Aegean Sea.

CODEL Blunt Discusses Iran with Prime Minister Erdogan  
Sabah, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report US members of the Congressional Delegation headed by Congressman Roy Blunt urged Prime Minister Erdogan to take both a personal and official interest with regard to Iran's nuclear capabilities during a meeting in Ankara on Tuesday. Erdogan told the delegation the US should not ignore Iran's call for negotiations, stressing Turkey favored a fair solution to the crisis. Erdogan and the US delegation also discussed Cyprus, relations between Israel and Palestine, Iraq and the so-called Armenian genocide.

Commentary on Iran  
Sami Uslu writing in the Islamist-oriented daily Zaman warns Iran that that it shouldn't rely on others for help:  
"Evaluating Iranian President Ahmedinejad's remarks, one can see clearly that he is relying on some people or something. But, Saddam Hussein used to rely on some people too. Once upon a time, Libyan leader Kaddafi trusted the Soviet Union and threatened the US. But, when the US planes were bombing Libya, Russian technicians in Libya to use anti-aircraft weapons, couldn't even stick their heads out of their tents. Another example is Vietnam: with support from Russia, Vietnam once threatened China but China retaliated severely with tanks and rockets. The Ottoman Empire also lost most of its land during World War 1 because it stood together with the Germans. It is obvious that Ahmedinejad is relying on Russia, China and Europe and that he believes that they will balance the US. I am afraid the result of this calculation will be disappointment. Any steps taken in the international arena without relying solely on your own power

create irreparable results."

TV Highlights  
NTV (7 a.m.)

#### Domestic News

- Prime Minister Erdogan told his party group Turkey's credibility had increased globally with exports rising from 36 billion USD to 73.4 billion as of end-2005, thanks to his government's efforts to promote Turkish interests around the world. Erdogan said he would visit Croatia on June 12, Macedonia on June 13-14, and Strasbourg on June 28.
- King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, in Turkey as the official guest of President Sezer, visited the Turkish parliament on Tuesday. Swedish businessmen accompany their King to Turkey, looking for new investment opportunities in the country.
- Deputy Prime Minister Abdullatif Seer said Turkey will give Turkish Cyprus a loan of 135 million USD.
- The leader of Turkey's main Kurdish party DTP, Ahmet Turk, called for a sweeping amnesty for members of the PKK, including their imprisoned leader Abdullah Ocalan, at a meeting in the northern Iraqi city of Suleymaniye.

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- Two Turkish soldiers and two PKK terrorists were killed in a clash in Cudi mountain in the southeastern Sirnak province on Turkey's borders with Iraq and Syria.
- Turkey's parliament is set to approve a controversial social security reform bill a second time this week, overriding President Sezer's veto of the IMF-backed reform earlier this month, saying it cut already-low pensions and set the retirement age at 65 in a country where the life expectancy is 66. The main opposition CHP left the parliamentary discussions on the bill. Hundreds of retired people and public servants clashed with riot police in Ankara during protests against the bill yesterday.

#### International News

- The EU's foreign policy chief Javier Solana said if Tehran rejects a prospective package of incentives in exchange of halting uranium enrichment, it would be a clear indication that Iran was working to produce nuclear weapons.
- A bomb targeting Greek Culture Minister George Voulgarakis went off near his home in Athens, causing material damage in the neighborhood but no injuries.
- The EU's highest court ruled that it was unlawful to order European airlines to pass on to the US government information about transatlantic air travelers.
- The European Union has put the Sri Lankan Tamil rebels on its list of terrorist organizations.

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